

Message Text

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SUBJECT: RECOMMENDATION FOR COMMENDABLE SERVICE AWARD

1. DURING THE PAST MONTH CONGEN NAPLES HAS RECEIVED ENDLESS
EXPRESSIONS OF GRATITUDE FOR THE MAGNIFICENT COLLABORATION AND
ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE UNITED STATES NAVY AND MARINE CORPS FOR SAVING
THE WATER SUPPLY OF THE CITY OF NAPLES. IN MID-APRIL A VITAL SECTION

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OF THE WATER SYSTEM WAS DESTROYED BY A LANDSLIDE. THE BREAK OCCURRED
IN REMOTE MOUNTAINOUS COUNTRY EAST OF NAPLES AND THE ONLY WAY TO
REPAIR THE SYSTEM WAS TO AIRLIFT HUGE STEEL PIPES INTO THE OTHERWISE
INACCESSIBLE AREA. NOT HAVING THE HELICOPTER CAPABILITY REQUIRED
TO LIFT SUCH WEIGHTS THE ITALIAN AUTHORITIES TURNED TO US FOR
EMERGENCY HELP. OUR MILITARY COMMANDERS AND THEIR OFFICERS AND MEN
RESPONDED WITH THE SPEED FOR WHICH THE U.S. MILITARY SERVICES ARE
FAMOUS IN CRISIS SITUATIONS. WORKING DAY AND NIGHT WITH ITALIAN
ENGINEERS THEY HELO-LIFTED 85 HUGE STEEL PIPES TO THE SITE AND
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SUPERVISED THE INSTALLATION OF THE NEW SUPPLY LINE. THE SIGNIFICANCE
OF THIS ACHIEVEMENT CANNOT BE OVEREMPHASIZED. NAPLES WATER SUPPLY
WAS FULLY RESTORED WITHIN A FEW DAYS RATHER THAN MANY WEEKS, PER-
HAPS MONTHS, AND THE QUICK EFFICIENT OPERATION NOT ONLY AVOIDED A
LENGTHY WATER CUT-OFF BUT ALSO THE OMINOUS POSSIBILITY OF A CHOLERA
EPIDEMIC WHICH HAD GRIPPED THE CITY WITH FEAR. IN THEIR REMARKS AND
LETTERS TO ME BOTH THE PREFECT OF NAPLES AND THE PRESIDENT OF THE

WATER COMPANY CITE THIS AND OTHER FEARFUL POTENTIAL PROBLEMS. THE ITALIAN NEWS MEDIA GAVE TREMENDOUS PUBLICITY TO THIS AMERICAN ACHIEVEMENT LOCALLY AND THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY. BOTH IN THE NEWS-PAPERS AND ON T.V. SCREENS IT CAME ACROSS AS A VERY TANGIBLE

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AFFIRMATION OF FRIENDSHIP AND THE CLOSE TIES BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES.

2. IN VIEW OF THE EXTRAORDINARY NATURE OF THIS ACHIEVEMENT, I STRONGLY URGE APPROVAL OF APPROPRIATE COMMENDATIONS FOR THE CO AND THE OFFICERS AND MEN OF THE 32ND MAU FOR THEIR LIFE-SAVING ACCOMPLISHMENT AND THE CO OF THE NAVAL SUPPORT ACTIVITY FOR INITIATING THE PROJECT AND FOR GENERATING A VAST AMOUNT OF HIGHLY FAVORABLE PUBLICITY. THE NEAPOLITANS ARE VERY MUCH AWARE THAT THE US MILITARY CAME TO THEIR RESCUE IN THEIR MOMENT OF NEED. THEY AND THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES ALSO CLEARLY UNDERSTAND THAT THIS EFFORT REPRESENTS AN ISOLATED ACT WHICH DOES NOT SET A PRECEDENT FOR FURTHER ASSISTANCE OF THIS NATURE. I HOPE THE COMMENDATIONS RECOMMENDED ABOVE WILL BE APPROVED PROMPTLY WHILE THE BRILLIANTLY EXECUTED OPERATION IS STILL FRESH ON THE ITALIANS' MINDS. ERNEST J. COLANTONIO, CONSUL GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

COLANTONIO

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